Issued Quarterly Number 149, Extra (T) January, 1902

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ERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

NATURE

BY

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

AND

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

N. Y. REGENTS' REQUIREMENTS

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BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND CHICAGO
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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The Riverside Literature Series

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE

BY

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

PRESCRIBED BY THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK FOR THE COURSE IN AMERICAN SELECTIONS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF EMERSON, AND NOTES TO BOTH ESSAYS

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
Boston: 4 Park Street; New York: 85 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 378-388 Wabash Avenue
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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CONTENTS.

	Page
Introduction	3
Emerson's Career	13
Nature. By Ralph Waldo Emerson	15
My Garden Acquaintance. By James Russell Lowell	43
Notes	73

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
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INTRODUCTION AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF EMERSON.[1]

AMONG that group of authors — Longfellow, Hawthorne, Holmes, Emerson, Lowell, and Whittier — on whose work the chief fame of American literature rests, Emerson was perhaps the most notable thinker. Both scholars and teachers are likely, therefore, to think of him as belonging more exclusively to readers of mature minds. Yet many of his most notable addresses were given before audiences of young men and women, and out of the great body of his writings it is not difficult to find many passages that go straight to the intelligence of boys and girls in school.

The essay on nature which is given here, profound as its deeper meanings are, is yet in the main so alive with interest that boys and girls who have

[1] A Biographical Sketch of Lowell may be found in *Riverside Literature Series*, No. 30, which contains the other selections from Lowell required by the New York Regents in the course of "American Selections."

begun to think cannot help finding it delightful reading. It is withal so inspiring, and will yield so much to any one who will take a little trouble to use his mind, that it is obviously desirable to bring it in convenient form to the attention of schools. Some of the best things in literature we can get only by digging for them; and there is great satisfaction in reading again and again masterpieces like that here given.

The fullest as it is the authoritative Life of Emerson is that by his literary executor, Mr. J. Elliot Cabot; but there is a shorter one in the *American Men of Letters* series by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, and a personal sketch, *Emerson in Concord*, by Dr. Edward W. Emerson, a son of the poet. Mr. George Willis Cooke, in his *Ralph Waldo Emerson, his Life, Writings, and Philosophy*, supplies many interesting facts, and helps the student to an understanding of the philosopher. There has also been published *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson*, and a great number of review articles, which may be found by consulting Poole's *Index*.

His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were all ministers, and indeed, on both his father's and mother's side, he belonged to an unbroken line of ministerial descent from the earliest settlers in New England. His ancestral home was

in Concord, Massachusetts, but at the time of his birth his father, the Rev. William Emerson, was minister of the First Church congregation in Boston. In Boston, then, he was born May 25, 1803. His father died when he was seven years old, but his mother continued to live in the parish house and to care for her family of five boys and a girl, all under ten years of age. Her one desire was to give these children an education, and for this she bore privations and endured hardships, which they shared bravely. During one year in the War of 1812, when the stoppage of commerce had made provisions high, Mrs. Emerson took her children to Concord and lived with them in the Old Manse which Hawthorne has described delightfully in his introduction to *Mosses from an Old Manse.* In that manse Emerson's grandfather was living when the Concord fight occurred.

Emerson was graduated at Harvard College in 1821, and after teaching a year or two gave himself to the study of divinity. He was not robust, there was a taint of consumption in the family, and he interrupted his study to travel in the South. His letters written at this time show that he was restless, and hard to be restrained within the bounds of the ministerial profession as it was then regarded in New England. He preached, however, from 1827 to 1832, and was for four years a col-

league pastor over the Second Church in Boston. His wife, whom he married in 1829, died in 1831, and his own health was precarious. The work of a preacher was not distasteful, but he had no aptitude for pastoral work, and he was out of sympathy with much that seemed to his associates essential in church order. The profession, which he had entered almost from necessity, since there was no other at that time in America which invited a student of Emerson's gifts and tastes, no longer seemed to him adjusted to his needs; it slipped from him, he resigned his pastorate; and though he preached occasionally afterward, he became thereafter distinctly a writer, maintaining himself mainly by lecturing, and living in a plain manner at Concord.

There was an intellectual ferment in New England when Emerson was in his early manhood, and he was himself one of the special and active agents in stirring the minds of men. Changes were taking place in the way in which people looked at education, religion, politics, and society. A great many subjects were discussed for which there seemed to be no place either in the pulpit or in legislatures, and those who had something to say were in great demand as lecturers. Public entertainments were not so varied then as now, nor so common, and people flocked to halls and meeting-

houses to hear lectures. Emerson, though not the most popular, was the most celebrated of these lecturers, and frequently gave courses of lectures in Boston and elsewhere. He was called upon also to speak at college commencements and on other special occasions, and it was rather through these lectures and addresses than through his printed books that, for a long time, he made himself known to men.

He made a voyage to Europe in 1833 on account of ill-health, and during his journey visited Thomas Carlyle, then scarcely more known than Emerson himself, who had, however, discovered his genius in his writings. From this beginning there grew one of the notable friendships which sometimes mark the association of intellectual men. Emerson went to Europe again in 1847, with special reference to courses of lectures which he had been invited to give in England. He made a third visit in 1872, and on these two occasions made and renewed acquaintance with leading thinkers and poets. Except for his lecturing tours and these journeys, and for one made across the continent in 1871 which has been agreeably recorded by James Bradley Thayer in his little volume, *A Western Journey with Mr. Emerson*, he spent his life quietly in Concord. He was married a second time in 1835, and died at Concord April 27, 1882.

His first published prose work was *Nature*, in 1836. He wrote poems when in college, but his first publication of verse was in *The Dial*, a magazine established in 1840, and the representative of a knot of men and women of whom Emerson was the acknowledged or unacknowledged leader. The first volume of his poems was published in 1847, and the second twenty years later. Meanwhile he put forth successive volumes of prose, and in the latest collective edition of his writings, the *Riverside Edition*, there is one volume of verse and ten of prose.

In form the prose is either the oration or the essay, with one exception. *English Traits* records the observations of the writer after his first two journeys to England; and while it may loosely be classed among essays, it has certain distinctive features which separate it from the essays of the same writer; there is in it narrative, reminiscence, and description, which make it more properly the note-book of a philosophic traveller.

Under the term "oration" may be included all those writings of Emerson which were delivered originally as lectures, addresses, orations before literary and learned societies and on special occasions. It may be said of his essays as well as of his deliberate orations that the writer never was wholly unmindful of an audience; he was conscious always

that he was not merely delivering his mind, but speaking directly to men. One is aware of a certain pointedness of speech which turns the writer into a speaker, and the printed words into a sounding voice. Especially if one ever heard Emerson does his impressive manner disclose itself in every sentence that one reads. In the orations, however, this directness of speech is most apparent, and their form is cast for it. The end of the speech is kept more positively before the speaker; there is also more distinct eloquence, that raising of the voice, by which the volume of an utterance is increased and a note of thought is prolonged. The form of the oration requires, moreover, a somewhat brisker manner and crisper sentences, for the speaker knows that the hearer has no leisure to pursue his way by winding clauses.

Yet the spirit of the essay, the other great division of Emerson's writing, more distinctly enters into the oration. It is true that in whatever he writes Emerson feels his audience, but it is an audience of thinking men, and he is not unwilling to give his best thought, and to surrender himself in his work to the leadings of his own thought. "Come with me," he seems to say to reader or listener; "we will follow courageously in this theme whithersoever Thought leads us:" thus in essay or oration he is less desirous of proving a proposition, or stat-

ing roundly something which he has discovered, than of entering upon a subject and letting his mind work freely upon it, gathering suggestions by the way, and asking for its association with other subjects. Hence, to one unaccustomed to Emerson's mind, a first reading of his writings seems to disclose only a series of lightly connected epigrams, or searching questions and answers. The very titles of the essays seem mere suggestions, and the end of an essay brings with it no conclusion. In the essay proper he allows himself more freedom than in the oration, and his sentences do not converge so distinctly toward some demonstrable point. The discursive character of his thought is best fitted to the essay form, where it is not necessary to make provision beforehand for every idea which is to be entertained, and where the perfection of form is in the graceful freedom from formalism. The oration may be described as one great sentence; the essay, as an unrestricted succession of little sentences.

"In writing my thoughts," Emerson once said, "I seek no order, or harmony, or result. I am not careful to see how they comport with other thoughts and other moods: I trust them for that. Any more than how any one minute of the year is related to any other remote minute, which yet I know is so related. The thoughts and the minutes

obey their own magnetisms, and will certainly reveal them in time." And in his journal he wrote: "If Minerva offered me a gift and an option, I would say, Give me continuity. I am tired of scraps. I do not wish to be a literary or intellectual *chiffonier*. Away with this Jew's rag-bag of ends and tufts of brocade, velvet, and cloth-of-gold, and let me spin some yards or miles of helpful twine; a clew to lead to one kingly truth; a cord to bind wholesome and belonging facts."

Mr. Cabot tells us that Emerson's practice was, "when a sentence had taken shape, to write it out in his journal, and leave it to find its fellows afterwards. These journals, paged and indexed, were the quarry from which he built his lectures and essays. When he had a paper to get ready, he took the material collected under the particular heading, and added whatever suggested itself at the moment. The proportion thus added seems to have varied considerably; it was large in the early time, say to about 1846, and sometimes very small in the later essays."

The single, apparently detached, thoughts impress one with a sense of the author's insight; their very abruptness often lends a positiveness and an authority to the statements and convictions, and a ready listener finds himself accepting them almost without consideration, so captivating are

they in their brilliant light. Yet something more than a ready listener is needed, if Emerson's writings are to be best used. They call for thought in the reader; they demand that one shall stop and ask questions, translate what one has read into one's ordinary speech, and inquire again if it be true. They are excellent tonics for the mind, but taken heedlessly they are dangerous. The danger is in the careless use, for carelessness makes half truths of what has been said frankly and fearlessly to the open mind. No one should read Emerson who is not willing to have his own weakness disclosed to him, and who is not prepared also to test what he finds by a standard which is above both writer and reader.

As one reads steadily, he is likely to note certain mental characteristics in the writer which mark all his work. One or two of these characteristics have already been mentioned; a more important and pervading one is his loyalty to idealism, and his belief in the power of the soul to work out a noble place for itself. The openness of his mind to new thought, his loyalty to high ideals, his eager advocacy of the real, and his insight into the nature of things, have separated him, and made his words sometimes unintelligible; but the serenity of his life and the courage of his speech have endeared him to men, even when they have thought him oblivious to some aspects of human life.

EMERSON'S CAREER.

Born in Boston, May 25, 1803.
Enters the Latin School, 1813.
Is taken to Concord to live in the old manse, 1814.
Returns to Boston, 1815.
Enters Harvard College, August, 1817.
Is graduated, 1821.
Teaches in a school for young ladies, 1821–24.
Returns to Cambridge to study divinity, 1825.
Licensed to preach, October 10, 1826.
Goes South for his health, November 25, 1826.
Returns, June, 1827.
Spends a year in Cambridge, preaching often, 1827–28.
Is ordained as colleague of Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., minister of the Second Church, Boston, March 11, 1829.
Is married to Ellen Louisa Tucker, September, 1829.
His wife dies, 1831.
Resigns his charge, December 22, 1832.
Sails for Europe, December 25, 1832.
Returns, September, 1833.
Begins to lecture, November, 1833.
Goes to Concord to live, October, 1834.
Is married to Lydia Jackson, September, 1835.
Secures the publication of Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, 1836.
Takes part in the founding of *The Dial*, September, 1836.
Publishes *Nature*, September, 1836.

Delivers his Phi Beta Kappa address on *The American Scholar*, August 31, 1837 (called by Dr. Holmes "our Intellectual Declaration of Independence").

Publishes his first series of Essays, 1841.

Publishes his first volume of Poems, 1846.

Makes a second visit to England, 1847.

Returns to Concord, 1848.

Publishes *Representative Men*, 1850.

Publishes *English Traits*, 1856.

Receives from Harvard the degree of LL. D., 1866.

Becomes an Overseer of Harvard College, 1867.

Makes a visit to California, 1871.

Loses his house by fire, and it is rebuilt by friends, 1872.

A third journey to Europe, October, 1872.

Dies, April 27, 1882.

NATURE.

The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery:
Though baffled seers cannot impart
The secret of its laboring heart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.
Spirit that lurks each form within
Beckons to spirit of its kin;
Self-kindled every atom glows,
And hints the future which it owes.

NATURE.

THERE are days which occur in this climate, at almost any season of the year, wherein the world reaches its perfection; when the air, the heavenly bodies and the earth, make a harmony, as if nature would indulge her offspring; when, in these bleak upper sides of the planet, nothing is to desire that we have heard of the happiest latitudes, and we bask in the shining hours of Florida and Cuba; when everything that has life gives sign of satisfaction, and the cattle that lie on the ground seem to have great and tranquil thoughts. These halcyons may be looked for with a little more assurance in that pure October weather which we distinguish by the name of the Indian summer. The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours, seems longevity enough. The solitary places do not seem quite lonely. At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and

small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he takes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes. Here we find Nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges like a god all men that come to her. We have crept out of our close and crowded houses into the night and morning, and we see what majestic beauties daily wrap us in their bosom. How willingly we would escape the barriers which render them comparatively impotent, escape the sophistication and second thought, and suffer nature to intrance us. The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. The anciently-reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year. How easily we might walk onward into the opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures and by thoughts fast succeeding each other, until by degrees the recollection of home was crowded out of the mind, all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led in triumph by nature.

These enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us. We come to our own, and make friends with matter, which the ambitious chatter of the schools would persuade us to despise. We never can part with it; the mind loves its old home: as water to our thirst, so is the rock, the ground, to our eyes and hands and feet. It is firm water; it is cold flame; what health, what affinity! Ever an old friend, ever like a dear friend and brother when we chat affectedly with strangers, comes in this honest face, and takes a grave liberty with us, and shames us out of our nonsense. Cities give not the human senses room enough. We go out daily and nightly to feed the eyes on the horizon, and require so much scope, just as we need water for our bath. There are all degrees of natural influence, from these quarantine powers of nature, up to her dearest and gravest ministrations to the imagination and the soul. There is the bucket of cold water from the spring, the wood-fire to which the chilled traveller rushes for safety, — and there is the sublime moral of autumn and of noon. We nestle in nature, and draw our living as parasites from her roots and grains, and we receive glances from the heavenly bodies, which call us to solitude and foretell the remotest future. The blue zenith is the point in which romance and reality meet. I

think if we should be rapt away into all that we dream of heaven, and should converse with Gabriel and Uriel, the upper sky would be all that would remain of our furniture.

It seems as if the day was not wholly profane in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains; the waving ryefield; the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical steaming odorous south wind, which converts all trees to windharps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames, or of pine logs, which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sittingroom, — these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion. My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one stroke of the paddle I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities, behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty; we dip our hands in this painted element; our eyes

are bathed in these lights and forms. A holiday, a villeggiatura, a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant. These sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify it and proffer it. I am taught the poorness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enhancement and sequel to this original beauty. I am overinstructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please. I cannot go back to toys. I am grown expensive and sophisticated. I can no longer live without elegance, but a countryman shall be my master of revels. He who knows the most; he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, — is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging-gardens, villas, garden-houses, islands, parks and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder that the landed interest should be invincible in the State with these dangerous auxiliaries. These bribe and invite; not kings, not pal-

aces, not men, not women, but these tender and poetic stars, eloquent of secret promises. We heard what the rich man said, we knew of his villa, his grove, his wine and his company, but the provocation and point of the invitation came out of these beguiling stars. In their soft glances I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles, or Paphos, or Ctesiphon. Indeed, it is the magical lights of the horizon and the blue sky for the background which save all our works of art, which were otherwise bawbles. When the rich tax the poor with servility and obsequiousness, they should consider the effect of men reputed to be the possessors of nature, on imaginative minds. Ah! if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches! A boy hears a military band play on the field at night, and he has kings and queens and famous chivalry palpably before him. He hears the echoes of a horn in a hill country, in the Notch Mountains, for example, which converts the mountains into an Æolian harp, — and this supernatural *tiralira* restores to him the Dorian mythology, Apollo, Diana, and all divine hunters and huntresses. Can a musical note be so lofty, so haughtily beautiful! To the poor young poet, thus fabulous is his picture of society; he is loyal; he respects the rich; they are rich for the sake of his imagination; how poor his fancy would be, if they were not rich! That they have some

high-fenced grove which they call a park; that they live in larger and better-garnished saloons than he has visited, and go in coaches, keeping only the society of the elegant, to watering-places and to distant cities, — these make the groundwork from which he has delineated estates of romance, compared with which their actual possessions are shanties and paddocks. The muse herself betrays her son, and enhances the gifts of wealth and well-born beauty by a radiation out of the air, and clouds, and forests that skirt the road, — a certain haughty favor, as if from patrician genii to patricians, a kind of aristocracy in nature, a prince of the power of the air.

The moral sensibility which makes Edens and Tempes so easily, may not be always found, but the material landscape is never far off. We can find these enchantments without visiting the Como Lake, or the Madeira Islands. We exaggerate the praises of local scenery. In every landscape the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth, and that is seen from the first hillock as well as from the top of the Alleghanies. The stars at night stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the Campagna, or on the marble deserts of Egypt. The uprolled clouds and the colors of morning and evening will transfigure

maples and alders. The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is great difference in the beholders. There is nothing so wonderful in any particular landscape as the necessity of being beautiful under which every landscape lies. Nature cannot be surprised in undress. Beauty breaks in everywhere.

But it is very easy to outrun the sympathy of readers on this topic, which schoolmen called *natura naturata*, or nature passive. One can hardly speak directly of it without excess. It is as easy to broach in mixed companies what is called "the subject of religion." A susceptible person does not like to indulge his tastes in this kind without the apology of some trivial necessity: he goes to see a wood-lot, or to look at the crops, or to fetch a plant or a mineral from a remote locality, or he carries a fowling-piece or a fishing-rod. I suppose this shame must have a good reason. A dilettantism in nature is barren and unworthy. The fop of fields is no better than his brother of Broadway. Men are naturally hunters and inquisitive of wood-craft, and I suppose that such a gazetteer as wood-cutters and Indians should furnish facts for, would take place in the most sumptuous drawing-rooms of all the "Wreaths" and "Flora's chaplets" of the bookshops; yet ordinarily, whether we are too clumsy for so subtle a topic, or from whatever cause, as soon as men begin

to write on nature, they fall into euphuism. Frivolity is a most unfit tribute to Pan, who ought to be represented in the mythology as the most continent of gods. I would not be frivolous before the admirable reserve and prudence of time, yet I cannot renounce the right of returning often to this old topic. The multitude of false churches accredits the true religion. Literature, poetry, science are the homage of man to this unfathomed secret, concerning which no sane man can affect an indifference or incuriosity. Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the city of God, although, or rather because there is no citizen. The sunset is unlike anything that is underneath it: it wants men. And the beauty of nature must always seem unreal and mocking, until the landscape has human figures that are as good as itself. If there were good men, there would never be this rapture in nature. If the king is in the palace, nobody looks at the walls. It is when he is gone, and the house is filled with grooms and gazers, that we turn from the people to find relief in the majestic men that are suggested by the pictures and the architecture. The critics who complain of the sickly separation of the beauty of nature from the thing to be done, must consider that our hunting of the picturesque is inseparable from our protest against false society. Man is fallen; nature is erect, and serves as a

differential thermometer, detecting the presence or absence of the divine sentiment in man. By fault of our dulness and selfishness we are looking up to nature, but when we are convalescent, nature will look up to us. We see the foaming brook with compunction: if our own life flowed with the right energy, we should shame the brook. The stream of zeal sparkles with real fire, and not with reflex rays of sun and moon. Nature may be as selfishly studied as trade. Astronomy to the selfish becomes astrology; psychology, mesmerism (with intent to show where our spoons are gone); and anatomy and physiology become phrenology and palmistry.

But taking timely warning, and leaving many things unsaid on this topic, let us not longer omit our homage to the Efficient Nature, *natura naturans*, the quick cause before which all forms flee as the driven snows; itself secret, its works driven before it in flocks and multitudes, (as the ancients represented nature by Proteus, a shepherd,) and in undescribable variety. It publishes itself in creatures, reaching from particles and spiculæ through transformation on transformation to the highest symmetries, arriving at consummate results without a shock or a leap. A little heat, that is a little motion, is all that differences the bald, dazzling white and deadly cold poles of the earth from the prolific tropical climates. All changes pass without vio-

lence, by reason of the two cardinal conditions of boundless space and boundless time. Geology has initiated us into the secularity of nature, and taught us to disuse our dame-school measures, and exchange our Mosaic and Ptolemaic schemes for her large style. We knew nothing rightly, for want of perspective. Now we learn what patient periods must round themselves before the rock is formed; then before the rock is broken, and the first lichen race has disintegrated the thinnest external plate into soil, and opened the door for the remote Flora, Fauna, Ceres, and Pomona to come in. How far off yet is the trilobite! how far the quadruped! how inconceivably remote is man! All duly arrive, and then race after race of men. It is a long way from granite to the oyster; farther yet to Plato and the preaching of the immortality of the soul. Yet all must come, as surely as the first atom has two sides.

Motion or change and identity or rest are the first and second secrets of nature: — Motion and Rest. The whole code of her laws may be written on the thumbnail, or the signet of a ring. The whirling bubble on the surface of a brook admits us to the secret of the mechanics of the sky. Every shell on the beach is a key to it. A little water made to rotate in a cup explains the formation of the simpler shells; the addition of matter from

year to year arrives at last at the most complex forms; and yet so poor is nature with all her craft, that from the beginning to the end of the universe she has but one stuff, — but one stuff with its two ends, to serve up all her dream-like variety. Compound it how she will, star, sand, fire, water, tree, man, it is still one stuff, and betrays the same properties.

Nature is always consistent, though she feigns to contravene her own laws. She keeps her laws, and seems to transcend them. She arms and equips an animal to find its place and living in the earth, and at the same time she arms and equips another animal to destroy it. Space exists to divide creatures; but by clothing the sides of a bird with a few feathers she gives him a petty omnipresence. The direction is forever onward, but the artist still goes back for materials and begins again with the first elements on the most advanced stage: otherwise all goes to ruin. If we look at her work, we seem to catch a glance of a system in transition. Plants are the young of the world, vessels of health and vigor; but they grope ever upward towards consciousness; the trees are imperfect men, and seem to bemoan their imprisonment, rooted in the ground. The animal is the novice and probationer of a more advanced order. The men, though young, having tasted the first drop from the cup of thought, are

already dissipated: the maples and ferns are still uncorrupt; yet no doubt when they come to consciousness they too will curse and swear. Flowers so strictly belong to youth that we adult men soon come to feel that their beautiful generations concern not us: we have had our day; now let the children have theirs. The flowers jilt us, and we are old bachelors with our ridiculous tenderness.

Things are so strictly related, that according to the skill of the eye, from any one object the parts and properties of any other may be predicted. If we had eyes to see it, a bit of stone from the city wall would certify us of the necessity that man must exist, as readily as the city. That identity makes us all one, and reduces to nothing great intervals on our customary scale. We talk of deviations from natural life, as if artificial life were not also natural. The smoothest curled courtier in the boudoirs of a palace has an animal nature, rude and aboriginal as a white bear, omnipotent to its own ends, and is directly related, there amid essences and billetsdoux, to Himmaleh mountain-chains and the axis of the globe. If we consider how much we are nature's, we need not be superstitious about towns, as if that terrific or benefic force did not find us there also, and fashion cities. Nature, who made the mason, made the house. We may easily hear too much of rural influences. The

cool disengaged air of natural objects makes them enviable to us, chafed and irritable creatures with red faces, and we think we shall be as grand as they if we camp out and eat roots; but let us be men instead of woodchucks and the oak and the elm shall gladly serve us, though we sit in chairs of ivory on carpets of silk.

This guiding identity runs through all the surprises and contrasts of the piece, and characterizes every law. Man carries the world in his head, the whole astronomy and chemistry suspended in a thought. Because the history of nature is charactered in his brain, therefore is he the prophet and discoverer of her secrets. Every known fact in natural science was divined by the presentiment of somebody, before it was actually verified. A man does not tie his shoe without recognizing laws which bind the farthest regions of nature: moon, plant, gas, crystal, are concrete geometry and numbers. Common sense knows its own, and recognizes the fact at first sight in chemical experiment. The common sense of Franklin, Dalton, Davy and Black, is the same common sense which made the arrangements which now it discovers.

If the identity expresses organized rest, the counter action runs also into organization. The astronomers said, 'Give us matter and a little motion and we will construct the universe. It is not enough

that we should have matter, we must also have a single impulse, one shove to launch the mass and generate the harmony of the centrifugal and centripetal forces. Once heave the ball from the hand, and we can show how all this mighty order grew.' —'A very unreasonable postulate,' said the metaphysicians, 'and a plain begging of the question. Could you not prevail to know the genesis of projection, as well as the continuation of it?' Nature, meanwhile, had not waited for the discussion, but, right or wrong, bestowed the impulse, and the balls rolled. It was no great affair, a mere push, but the astronomers were right in making much of it, for there is no end to the consequences of the act. That famous aboriginal push propagates itself through all the balls of the system, and through every atom of every ball; through all the races of creatures, and through the history and performances of every individual. Exaggeration is in the course of things. Nature sends no creature, no man into the world without adding a small excess of his proper quality. Given the planet, it is still necessary to add the impulse; so to every creature nature added a little violence of direction in its proper path, a shove to put it on its way; in every instance a slight generosity, a drop too much. Without electricity the air would rot, and without this violence of direction which men and women have, without a spice of

bigot and fanatic, no excitement, no efficiency. We aim above the mark to hit the mark. Every act hath some falsehood of exaggeration in it. And when now and then comes along some sad, sharp-eyed man, who sees how paltry a game is played, and refuses to play but blabs the secret; — how then? Is the bird flown? O no, the wary Nature sends a new troop of fairer forms, of lordlier youths, with a little more excess of direction to hold them fast to their several aim; makes them a little wrong-headed in that direction in which they are rightest, and on goes the game again with new whirl, for a generation or two more. The child with his sweet pranks, the fool of his senses, commanded by every sight and sound, without any power to compare and rank his sensations, abandoned to a whistle or a painted chip, to a lead dragoon or a gingerbread-dog, individualizing everything, generalizing nothing, delighted with every new thing, lies down at night overpowered by the fatigue which this day of continual pretty madness has incurred. But Nature has answered her purpose with the curly, dimpled lunatic. She has tasked every faculty, and has secured the symmetrical growth of the bodily frame by all these attitudes and exertions, — an end of the first importance, which could not be trusted to any care less perfect than her own. This glitter, this opaline lustre plays round the top of every toy to

his eye to insure his fidelity, and he is deceived to his good. We are made alive and kept alive by the same arts. Let the stoics say what they please, we do not eat for the good of living, but because the meat is savory and the appetite is keen. The vegetable life does not content itself with casting from the flower or the tree a single seed, but it fills the air and earth with a prodigality of seeds, that, if thousands perish, thousands may plant themselves; that hundreds may come up, that tens may live to maturity; that at least one may replace the parent. All things betray the same calculated profusion. The excess of fear with which the animal frame is hedged round, shrinking from cold, starting at sight of a snake or at a sudden noise, protects us, through a multitude of groundless alarms, from some one real danger at last. The lover seeks in marriage his private felicity and perfection, with no prospective end; and nature hides in his happiness her own end, namely progeny, or the perpetuity of the race.

But the craft with which the world is made, runs also into the mind and character of men. No man is quite sane; each has a vein of folly in his composition, a slight determination of blood to the head, to make sure of holding him hard to some one point which nature had taken to heart. Great causes are never tried on their merits; but the cause is re-

duced to particulars to suit the size of the partisans, and the contention is ever hottest on minor matters. Not less remarkable is the overfaith of each man in the importance of what he has to do or say. The poet, the prophet, has a higher value for what he utters than any hearer, and therefore it gets spoken. The strong, self-complacent Luther declares with an emphasis not to be mistaken, that "God himself cannot do without wise men." Jacob Behmen and George Fox betray their egotism in the pertinacity of their controversial tracts, and James Naylor once suffered himself to be worshipped as the Christ. Each prophet comes presently to identify himself with his thought, and to esteem his hat and shoes sacred. However this may discredit such persons with the judicious, it helps them with the people, as it gives heat, pungency, and publicity to their words. A similar experience is not infrequent in private life. Each young and ardent person writes a diary, in which, when the hours of prayer and penitence arrive, he inscribes his soul. The pages thus written are to him burning and fragrant; he reads them on his knees by midnight and by the morning star; he wets them with his tears; they are sacred; too good for the world, and hardly yet to be shown to the dearest friend. This is the manchild that is born to the soul, and her life still circulates in the babe. The umbilical cord has not yet

been cut. After some time has elapsed, he begins to wish to admit his friend to this hallowed experience, and with hesitation, yet with firmness, exposes the pages to his eye. Will they not burn his eyes? The friend coldly turns them over, and passes from the writing to conversation, with easy transition, which strikes the other party with astonishment and vexation. He cannot suspect the writing itself. Days and nights of fervid life, of communion with angels of darkness and of light have engraved their shadowy characters on that tear-stained book. He suspects the intelligence or the heart of his friend. Is there then no friend? He cannot yet credit that one may have impressive experience and yet may not know how to put his private fact into literature: and perhaps the discovery that wisdom has other tongues and ministers than we, that though we should hold our peace the truth would not the less be spoken, might check injuriously the flames of our zeal. A man can only speak so long as he does not feel his speech to be partial and inadequate. It is partial, but he does not see it to be so whilst he utters it. As soon as he is released from the instinctive and particular and sees its partiality, he shuts his mouth in disgust. For no man can write anything who does not think that what he writes is for the time the history of the world; or do anything well who does not esteem his work to be of

importance. My work may be of none, but I must not think it of none, or I shall not do it with impunity.

In like manner, there is throughout nature something mocking, something that leads us on and on, but arrives nowhere; keeps no faith with us. All promise outruns the performance. We live in a system of approximations. Every end is prospective of some other end, which is also temporary; a round and final success nowhere. We are encamped in nature, not domesticated. Hunger and thirst lead us on to eat and to drink; but bread and wine, mix and cook them how you will, leave us hungry and thirsty, after the stomach is full. It is the same with all our arts and performances. Our music, our poetry, our language itself are not satisfactions, but suggestions. The hunger for wealth, which reduces the planet to a garden, fools the eager pursuer. What is the end sought? Plainly to secure the ends of good sense and beauty from the intrusion of deformity or vulgarity of any kind. But what an operose method! What a train of means to secure a little conversation! This palace of brick and stone, these servants, this kitchen, these stables, horses and equipage, this bank-stock and file of mortgages; trade to all the world, country-house and cottage by the waterside, all for a little conversation, high, clear, and spiritual! Could

it not be had as well by beggars on the highway? No, all these things came from successive efforts of these beggars to remove friction from the wheels of life, and give opportunity. Conversation, character, were the avowed ends; wealth was good as it appeased the animal cravings, cured the smoky chimney, silenced the creaking door, brought friends together in a warm and quiet room, and kept the children and the dinner-table in a different apartment. Thought, virtue, beauty, were the ends; but it was known that men of thought and virtue sometimes had the headache, or wet feet, or could lose good time whilst the room was getting warm in winter days. Unluckily, in the exertions necessary to remove these inconveniences, the main attention has been diverted to this object; the old aims have been lost sight of, and to remove friction has come to be the end. That is the ridicule of rich men; and Boston, London, Vienna, and now the governments generally of the world are cities and governments of the rich; and the masses are not men, but *poor men*, that is, men who would be rich; this is the ridicule of the class, that they arrive with pains and sweat and fury nowhere; when all is done, it is for nothing. They are like one who has interrupted the conversation of a company to make his speech, and now has forgotten what he went to say. The appearance strikes

the eye everywhere of an aimless society, of aimless nations. Were the ends of nature so great and cogent as to exact this immense sacrifice of men?

Quite analogous to the deceits in life, there is, as might be expected, a similar effect on the eye from the face of external nature. There is in woods and waters a certain enticement and flattery, together with a failure to yield a present satisfaction. This disappointment is felt in every landscape. I have seen the softness and beauty of the summer clouds floating feathery overhead, enjoying, as it seemed, their height and privilege of motion, whilst yet they appeared not so much the drapery of this place and hour, as forelooking to some pavilions and gardens of festivity beyond. It is an odd jealousy, but the poet finds himself not near enough to his object. The pine-tree, the river, the bank of flowers before him does not seem to be nature. Nature is still elsewhere. This or this is but outskirt and far-off reflection and echo of the triumph that has passed by and is now at its glancing splendor and heyday, perchance in the neighboring fields, or, if you stand in the field, then in the adjacent woods. The present object shall give you this sense of stillness that follows a pageant which has just gone by. What splendid distance, what recesses of ineffable pomp and love-

liness in the sunset! But who can go where they are, or lay his hand or plant his foot thereon? Off they fall from the round world forever and ever. It is the same among the men and women as among the silent trees; always a referred existence, an absence, never a presence and satisfaction. Is it that beauty can never be grasped? in persons and in landscape is equally inaccessible? The accepted and betrothed lover has lost the wildest charm of his maiden in her acceptance of him. She was heaven whilst he pursued her as a star: she cannot be heaven if she stoops to such a one as he.

What shall we say of this omnipresent appearance of that first projectile impulse, of this flattery and balking of so many well-meaning creatures? Must we not suppose somewhere in the universe a slight treachery and derision? Are we not engaged to a serious resentment of this use that is made of us? Are we tickled trout, and fools of nature? One look at the face of heaven and earth lays all petulance at rest, and soothes us to wiser convictions. To the intelligent, nature converts itself into a vast promise, and will not be rashly explained. Her secret is untold. Many and many an Œdipus arrives; he has the whole mystery teeming in his brain. Alas! the same sorcery has spoiled his skill; no syllable can he shape on his lips. Her

mighty orbit vaults like the fresh rainbow into the deep, but no archangel's wing was yet strong enough to follow it and report of the return of the curve. But it also appears that our actions are seconded and disposed to greater conclusions than we designed. We are escorted on every hand through life by spiritual agents, and a beneficent purpose lies in wait for us. We cannot bandy words with Nature, or deal with her as we deal with persons. If we measure our individual forces against hers we may easily feel as if we were the sport of an insuperable destiny. But if, instead of identifying ourselves with the work, we feel that the soul of the workman streams through us, we shall find the peace of the morning dwelling first in our hearts, and the fathomless powers of gravity and chemistry, and, over them, of life, preëxisting within us in their highest form.

The uneasiness which the thought of our helplessness in the chain of causes occasions us, results from looking too much at one condition of nature, namely, Motion. But the drag is never taken from the wheel. Wherever the impulse exceeds, the Rest or Identity insinuates its compensation. All over the wide fields of earth grows the prunella or self-heal. After every foolish day we sleep off the fumes and furies of its hours; and though we are always engaged with particulars, and often enslaved

to them, we bring with us to every experiment the innate universal laws. These, while they exist in the mind as ideas, stand around us in nature forever embodied, a present sanity to expose and cure the insanity of men. Our servitude to particulars betrays us into a hundred foolish expectations. We anticipate a new era from the invention of a locomotive, or a balloon; the new engine brings with it the old checks. They say that by electromagnetism your salad shall be grown from the seed whilst your fowl is roasting for dinner; it is a symbol of our modern aims and endeavors, of our condensation and acceleration of objects; — but nothing is gained; nature cannot be cheated; man's life is but seventy salads long, grow they swift or grow they slow. In these checks and impossibilities however we find our advantage, not less than in the impulses. Let the victory fall where it will, we are on that side. And the knowledge that we traverse the whole scale of being, from the centre to the poles of nature, and have some stake in every possibility, lends that sublime lustre to death, which philosophy and religion have too outwardly and literally striven to express in the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The reality is more excellent than the report. Here is no ruin, no discontinuity, no spent ball. The divine circulations never rest nor linger. Nature is the incarnation of

a thought, and turns to a thought again, as ice becomes water and gas. The world is mind precipitated, and the volatile essence is forever escaping again into the state of free thought. Hence the virtue and pungency of the influence on the mind of natural objects, whether inorganic or organized. Man imprisoned, man crystallized, man vegetative, speaks to man impersonated. That power which does not respect quantity, which makes the whole and the particle its equal channel, delegates its smile to the morning, and distils its essence into every drop of rain. Every moment instructs, and every object; for wisdom is infused into every form. It has been poured into us as blood; it convulsed us as pain; it slid into us as pleasure; it enveloped us in dull, melancholy days, or in days of cheerful labor; we did not guess its essence until after a long time.

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE

By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE

One of the most delightful books in my father's library was White's "Natural History of Selborne." For me it has rather gained in charm with years. I used to read it without knowing the secret of the pleasure I found in it, but as I grow older I begin to detect some of the simple expedients of this natural magic. Open the book where you will, it takes you out of doors. In our broiling July weather one can walk out with this genially garrulous Fellow of Oriel and find refreshment instead of fatigue. You have no trouble in keeping abreast of him as he ambles along on his hobby-horse, now pointing to a pretty view, now stopping to watch the motions of a bird or an insect, or to bag a specimen for the Honourable Daines Barrington or Mr. Pennant. In simplicity of taste and natural refinement he reminds one of Walton; in tenderness toward what he would have called the brute creation, of Cowper. I do not know whether his descriptions of scenery are good or not, but they have made me familiar with his neighborhood. Since I first read him, I have walked over some of his favorite haunts, but I still see them through his eyes rather than by any recollection of actual and

personal vision. The book has also the delightfulness of absolute leisure. Mr. White seems never to have had any harder work to do than to study the habits of his feathered fellow-townsfolk, or to watch the ripening of his peaches on the wall. No doubt he looked after the souls of his parishioners with official and even friendly interest, but, I cannot help suspecting, with a less personal solicitude. For he seems to have lived before the Fall. His volumes are the journal of Adam in Paradise,

> "Annihilating all that 's made
> To a green thought in a green shade."

It is positive rest only to look into that garden of his. It is vastly better than to

> "See great Diocletian walk
> In the Salonian garden's noble shade,"

for thither ambassadors intrude to bring with them the noises of Rome, while here the world has no entrance. No rumor of the revolt of the American Colonies appears to have reached him. "The natural term of an hog's life" has more interest for him than that of an empire. Burgoyne may surrender and welcome; of what consequence is *that* compared with the fact that we can explain the odd tumbling of rooks in the air by their turning over "to scratch themselves with one claw"? All the couriers in Europe spurring rowel-deep make no stir in Mr. White's little Chartreuse; but the arrival of the house-martin a day earlier or later than last year is a piece of news worth sending express to all his correspondents.

Another secret charm of this book is its inad-

vertent humor, so much the more delicious because unsuspected by the author. How pleasant is his innocent vanity in adding to the list of the British, and still more of the Selbornian, *fauna!* I believe he would gladly have consented to be eaten by a tiger or a crocodile, if by that means the occasional presence within the parish limits of either of these anthropophagous brutes could have been established. He brags of no fine society, but is plainly a little elated by "having considerable acquaintance with a tame brown owl." Most of us have known our share of owls, but few can boast of intimacy with a feathered one. The great events of Mr. White's life, too, have that disproportionate importance which is always humorous. To think of his hands having actually been thought worthy (as neither Willoughby's nor Ray's were) to hold a stilted plover, the *Charadrius himantopus*, with no back toe, and therefore "liable, in speculation, to perpetual vacillations"! I wonder, by the way, if metaphysicians have no hind toes. In 1770 he makes the acquaintance in Sussex of "an old family tortoise," which had then been domesticated for thirty years. It is clear that he fell in love with it at first sight. We have no means of tracing the growth of his passion; but in 1780 we find him eloping with its object in a post-chaise. "The rattle and hurry of the journey so perfectly roused it that, when I turned it out in a border, it walked twice down to the bottom of my garden." It reads like a Court Journal: "Yesterday morning H. R. H. the Princess Alice took an airing of half an hour

on the terrace of Windsor Castle." This tortoise might have been a member of the Royal Society, if he could have condescended to so ignoble an ambition. It had but just been discovered that a surface inclined at a certain angle with the plane of the horizon took more of the sun's rays. The tortoise had always known this (though he unostentatiously made no parade of it), and used accordingly to tilt himself up against the garden-wall in the autumn. He seems to have been more of a philosopher than even Mr. White himself, caring for nothing but to get under a cabbage-leaf when it rained, or when the sun was too hot, and to bury himself alive before frost, — a four-footed Diogenes, who carried his tub on his back.

There are moods in which this kind of history is infinitely refreshing. These creatures whom we affect to look down upon as the drudges of instinct are members of a commonwealth whose constitution rests on immovable bases. Never any need of reconstruction there! *They* never dream of settling it by vote that eight hours are equal to ten, or that one creature is as clever as another and no more. *They* do not use their poor wits in regulating God's clocks, nor think they cannot go astray so long as they carry their guide-board about with them, — a delusion we often practise upon ourselves with our high and mighty reason, that admirable finger-post which points every way, as we choose to turn it, and always right. It is good for us now and then to converse with a world like Mr. White's, where Man is the least important of animals. But one

who, like me, has always lived in the country and always on the same spot, is drawn to his book by other occult sympathies. Do we not share his indignation at that stupid Martin who had graduated his thermometer no lower than 4° above zero of Fahrenheit, so that in the coldest weather ever known the mercury basely absconded into the bulb, and left us to see the victory slip through our fingers just as they were closing upon it? No man, I suspect, ever lived long in the country without being bitten by these meteorological ambitions. He likes to be hotter and colder, to have been more deeply snowed up, to have more trees, and larger, blown down than his neighbors. With us descendants of the Puritans especially, these weather-competitions supply the abnegated excitement of the race-course. Men learn to value thermometers of the true imaginative temperament, capable of prodigious elations and corresponding dejections. The other day (5th July) I marked 98° in the shade, my high-water mark, higher by one degree than I had ever seen it before. I happened to meet a neighbor; as we mopped our brows at each other, he told me that he had just cleared 100°, and I went home a beaten man. I had not felt the heat before, save as a beautiful exaggeration of sunshine; but now it oppressed me with the prosaic vulgarity of an oven. What had been poetic intensity became all at once rhetorical hyperbole. I might suspect his thermometer (as indeed I did, for we Harvard men are apt to think ill of any graduation save our own); but it was a poor con-

solation. The fact remained that his herald Mercury, standing a-tiptoe, could look down on mine. I seem to glimpse something of this familiar weakness in Mr. White. He, too, has shared in these mercurial triumphs and defeats. Nor do I doubt that he had a true country-gentleman's interest in the weathercock ; that his first question on coming down of a morning was, like Barabas's,

"Into what quarter peers my halcyon's bill ?"

It is an innocent and healthful employment of the mind, distracting one from too continual study of oneself, and leading one to dwell rather upon the indigestions of the elements than one's own. "Did the wind back round, or go about with the sun?" is a rational question that bears not remotely on the making of hay and the prosperity of crops. I have little doubt that the regulated observation of the vane in many different places, and the interchange of results by telegraph, would put the weather, as it were, in our power, by betraying its ambushes before it is ready to give the assault.[1] At first sight, nothing seems more drolly trivial than the lives of those whose single achievement is to record the wind and the temperature three times a day. Yet such men are doubtless sent into the world for this special end, and perhaps there is no kind of accurate observation, whatever its object, that has not its final use and value for some one or other. It is even to be hoped that the speculations of our newspaper editors and their myriad correspon-

[1] This was written before we had a Weather Bureau.

dents upon the signs of the political atmosphere may also fill their appointed place in a well-regulated universe, if it be only that of supplying so many more jack-o'-lanterns to the future historian. Nay, the observations on finance of an M. C. whose sole knowledge of the subject has been derived from a lifelong success in getting a living out of the public without paying any equivalent therefor, will perhaps be of interest hereafter to some explorer of our *cloaca maxima*, whenever it is cleansed.

For many years I have been in the habit of noting down some of the leading events of my embowered solitude, such as the coming of certain birds and the like, — a kind of *mémoires pour servir*, after the fashion of White, rather than properly digested natural history. I think it not impossible that a few simple stories of my winged acquaintances might be found entertaining by persons of kindred taste.

There is a common notion that animals are better meteorologists than men, and I have little doubt that in immediate weather-wisdom they have the advantage of our sophisticated senses (though I suspect a sailor or shepherd would be their match), but I have seen nothing that leads me to believe their minds capable of erecting the horoscope of a whole season, and letting us know beforehand whether the winter will be severe or the summer rainless. Their foresight is provincial or even parochial,

> "By nature knew he ech ascensioun
> Of equinoxial in thilke toun."

I more than suspect that the Clerk of the Weather himself does not always know very long in advance whether he is to draw an order for hot or cold, dry or moist, and the musquash is scarce likely to be wiser. I have noted but two days' difference in the coming of the song-sparrow between a very early and a very backward spring. This very year I saw the linnets at work thatching, just before a snow-storm which covered the ground several inches deep for a number of days. They struck work and left us for a while, no doubt in search of food. Birds frequently perish from sudden changes in our whimsical spring weather of which they had no foreboding. More than thirty years ago, a cherry-tree, then in full bloom, near my window, was covered with humming-birds benumbed by a fall of mingled rain and snow, which probably killed many of them. It should seem that their coming was dated by the height of the sun, which betrays them into unthrifty matrimony;

"So nature pricketh hem in their corages";

but their going is another matter. The chimney-swallows leave us early, for example, apparently so soon as their latest fledglings are firm enough of wing to attempt the long rowing-match that is before them. On the other hand, the wild-geese probably do not leave the North till they are frozen out, for I have heard their bugles sounding southward so late as the middle of December. What may be called local migrations are doubtless dictated by the chances of food. I have once been visited by large flights of cross-bills; and whenever the

snow lies long and deep on the ground, a flock of cedar-birds comes in midwinter to eat the berries on my hawthorns. I have never been quite able to fathom the local, or rather geographical partialities of birds. Never before this summer (1870) have the king-birds, handsomest of flycatchers, built in my orchard; though I always know where to find them within half a mile. The rose-breasted grosbeak has been a familiar bird in Brookline (three miles away), yet I never saw one here till last July, when I found a female busy among my raspberries and surprisingly bold. I hope she was *prospecting* with a view to settlement in our garden. She seemed, on the whole, to think well of my fruit, and I would gladly plant another bed if it would help to win over so delightful a neighbor.

The return of the robin is commonly announced by the newspapers, like that of eminent or notorious people to a watering-place, as the first authentic notification of spring. And such his appearance in the orchard and garden undoubtedly is. But, in spite of his name of migratory thrush, he stays with us all winter, and I have seen him when the thermometer marked 15 degrees below zero of Fahrenheit, armed impregnably within, like Emerson's Titmouse, and as cheerful as he. The robin has a bad reputation among people who do not value themselves less for being fond of cherries. There is, I admit, a spice of vulgarity in him, and his song is rather of the Bloomfield sort, too largely ballasted with prose. His ethics are of the Poor

Richard school, and the main chance which calls forth all his energy is altogether of the belly. He never has those fine intervals of lunacy into which his cousins, the catbird and the mavis, are apt to fall. But for a' that and twice as muckle 's a' that, I would not exchange him for all the cherries that ever came out of Asia Minor. With whatever faults, he has not wholly forfeited that superiority which belongs to the children of nature. He has a finer taste in fruit than could be distilled from many successive committees of the Horticultural Society, and he eats with a relishing gulp not inferior to Dr. Johnson's. He feels and freely exercises his right of eminent domain. His is the earliest mess of green peas ; his all the mulberries I had fancied mine. But if he get also the lion's share of the raspberries, he is a great planter, and sows those wild ones in the woods, that solace the pedestrian and give a momentary calm even to the jaded victims of the White Hills. He keeps a strict eye over one's fruit, and knows to a shade of purple when your grapes have cooked long enough in the sun. During the severe drought a few years ago, the robins wholly vanished from my garden. I neither saw nor heard one for three weeks. Meanwhile a small foreign grape-vine, rather shy of bearing, seemed to find the dusty air congenial, and, dreaming perhaps of its sweet Argos across the sea, decked itself with a score or so of fair bunches. I watched them from day to day till they should have secreted sugar enough from the sunbeams, and at last made up my mind that

I would celebrate my vintage the next morning. But the robins too had somehow kept note of them. They must have sent out spies, as did the Jews into the promised land, before I was stirring. When I went with my basket, at least a dozen of these winged vintagers bustled out from among the leaves, and alighting on the nearest trees interchanged some shrill remarks about me of a derogatory nature. They had fairly sacked the vine. Not Wellington's veterans made cleaner work of a Spanish town ; not Federals or Confederates were ever more impartial in the confiscation of neutral chickens. I was keeping my grapes a secret to surprise the fair Fidele with, but the robins made them a profounder secret to her than I had meant. The tattered remnant of a single bunch was all my harvest-home. How paltry it looked at the bottom of my basket, — as if a humming-bird had laid her egg in an eagle's nest ! I could not help laughing ; and the robins seemed to join heartily in the merriment. There was a native grape-vine close by, blue with its less refined abundance, but my cunning thieves preferred the foreign flavor. Could I tax them with want of taste ?

The robins are not good solo singers, but their chorus, as, like primitive fire-worshippers, they hail the return of light and warmth to the world, is unrivalled. There are a hundred singing like one. They are noisy enough then, and sing, as poets should, with no afterthought. But when they come after cherries to the tree near my window, they muffle their voices, and their faint *pip*, *pip*, *pop !*

sounds far away at the bottom of the garden, where they know I shall not suspect them of robbing the great black-walnut of its bitter-rinded store.[1] They are feathered Pecksniffs, to be sure, but then how brightly their breasts, that look rather shabby in the sunlight, shine in a rainy day against the dark green of the fringe-tree! After they have pinched and shaken all the life out of an earthworm, as Italian cooks pound all the spirit out of a steak, and then gulped him, they stand up in honest self-confidence, expand their red waistcoats with the virtuous air of a lobby member, and outface you with an eye that calmly challenges inquiry. "Do *I* look like a bird that knows the flavor of raw vermin? I throw myself upon a jury of my peers. Ask any robin if he ever ate anything less ascetic than the frugal berry of the juniper, and he will answer that his vow forbids him." Can such an open bosom cover such depravity? Alas, yes! I have no doubt his breast was redder at that very moment with the blood of my raspberries. On the whole, he is a doubtful friend in the garden. He makes his dessert of all kinds of berries, and is not averse from early pears. But when we remember how omnivorous he is, eating his own weight in an incredibly short time, and that Nature seems exhaustless in her invention of new insects hostile to vegetation, perhaps we may reckon that he does more good than harm. For my own part,

[1] The screech-owl, whose cry, despite his ill name, is one of the sweetest sounds in nature, softens his voice in the same way with the most beguiling mockery of distance.

I would rather have his cheerfulness and kind neighborhood than many berries.

For his cousin, the catbird, I have a still warmer regard. Always a good singer, he sometimes nearly equals the brown thrush, and has the merit of keeping up his music later in the evening than any bird of my familiar acquaintance. Ever since I can remember, a pair of them have built in a gigantic syringa, near our front door, and I have known the male to sing almost uninterruptedly during the evenings of early summer till twilight duskened into dark. They differ greatly in vocal talent, but all have a delightful way of crooning over, and, as it were, rehearsing their song in an undertone, which makes their nearness always unobtrusive. Though there is the most trustworthy witness to the imitative propensity of this bird, I have only once, during an intimacy of more than forty years, heard him indulge it. In that case, the imitation was by no means so close as to deceive, but a free reproduction of the notes of some other birds, especially of the oriole, as a kind of variation in his own song. The catbird is as shy as the robin is vulgarly familiar. Only when his nest or his fledglings are approached does he become noisy and almost aggressive. I have known him to station his young in a thick cornel-bush on the edge of the raspberry-bed, after the fruit began to ripen, and feed them there for a week or more. In such cases he shows none of that conscious guilt which makes the robin contemptible. On the contrary, he will maintain his post in the

thicket, and sharply scold the intruder who ventures to steal *his* berries. After all, his claim is only for tithes, while the robin will bag your entire crop if he get a chance.

Dr. Watts's statement that "birds in their little nests agree," like too many others intended to form the infant mind, is very far from being true. On the contrary, the most peaceful relation of the dif ferent species to each other is that of armed neutrality. They are very jealous of neighbors. A few years ago, I was much interested in the house-building of a pair of summer yellow-birds. They had chosen a very pretty site near the top of a tall white lilac, within easy eye-shot of a chamber window. A very pleasant thing it was to see their little home growing with mutual help, to watch their industrious skill interrupted only by little flirts and snatches of endearment, frugally cut short by the common-sense of the tiny housewife. They had brought their work nearly to an end, and had already begun to line it with fern-down, the gathering of which demanded more distant journeys and longer absences. But, alas! the syringa, immemorial manor of the catbirds, was not more than twenty feet away, and these "giddy neighbors" had, as it appeared, been all along jealously watchful, though silent, witnesses of what they deemed an intrusion of squatters. No sooner were the pretty mates fairly gone for a new load of lining, than

> "To their unguarded nest these weasel Scots
> Came stealing."

Silently they flew back and forth, each giving a

vengeful dab at the nest in passing. They did not fall-to and deliberately destroy it, for they might have been caught at their mischief. As it was, whenever the yellow-birds came back, their enemies were hidden in their own sight-proof bush. Several times their unconscious victims repaired damages, but at length, after counsel taken together, they gave it up. Perhaps, like other unlettered folk, they came to the conclusion that the Devil was in it, and yielded to the invisible persecutions of witchcraft.

The robins, by constant attacks and annoyances, have succeeded in driving off the blue-jays who used to build in our pines, their gay colors and quaint noisy ways making them welcome and amusing neighbors. I once had the chance of doing a kindness to a household of them, which they received with very friendly condescension. I had had my eye for some time upon a nest, and was puzzled by a constant fluttering of what seemed full-grown wings in it whenever I drew nigh. At last I climbed the tree, in spite of angry protests from the old birds against my intrusion. The mystery had a very simple solution. In building the nest, a long piece of packthread had been somewhat loosely woven in. Three of the young had contrived to entangle themselves in it, and had become full-grown without being able to launch themselves upon the air. One was unharmed; another had so tightly twisted the cord about its shank that one foot was curled up and seemed paralyzed; the third, in its struggles to

escape, had sawn through the flesh of the thigh and so much harmed itself that I thought it humane to put an end to its misery. When I took out my knife to cut their hempen bonds, the heads of the family seemed to divine my friendly intent. Suddenly ceasing their cries and threats, they perched quietly within reach of my hand, and watched me in my work of manumission. This, owing to the fluttering terror of the prisoners, was an affair of some delicacy; but erelong I was rewarded by seeing one of them fly away to a neighboring tree, while the cripple, making a parachute of his wings, came lightly to the ground, and hopped off as well as he could with one leg, obsequiously waited on by his elders. A week later I had the satisfaction of meeting him in the pine-walk, in good spirits, and already so far recovered as to be able to balance himself with the lame foot. I have no doubt that in his old age he accounted for his lameness by some handsome story of a wound received at the famous Battle of the Pines, when our tribe, overcome by numbers, was driven from its ancient camping-ground. Of late years the jays have visited us only at intervals; and in winter their bright plumage, set off by the snow, and their cheerful cry, are especially welcome. They would have furnished Æsop with a fable, for the feathered crest in which they seem to take so much satisfaction is often their fatal snare. Country boys make a hole with their finger in the snow-crust just large enough to admit the jay's head, and, hollowing it out somewhat beneath, bait it

with a few kernels of corn. The crest slips easily into the trap, but refuses to be pulled out again, and he who came to feast remains a prey.

Twice have the crow-blackbirds attempted a settlement in my pines, and twice have the robins, who claim a right of preëmption, so successfully played the part of border-ruffians as to drive them away, — to my great regret, for they are the best substitute we have for rooks. At Shady Hill (now, alas! empty of its so long-loved household) they build by hundreds, and nothing can be more cheery than their creaking clatter (like a convention of old-fashioned tavern-signs) as they gather at evening to debate in mass meeting their windy politics, or to gossip at their tent-doors over the events of the day. Their port is grave, and their stalk across the turf as martial as that of a second-rate ghost in Hamlet. They never meddled with my corn, so far as I could discover.

For a few years I had crows, but their nests are an irresistible bait for boys, and their settlement was broken up. They grew so wonted as to throw off a great part of their shyness, and to tolerate my near approach. One very hot day I stood for some time within twenty feet of a mother and three children, who sat on an elm bough over my head, gasping in the sultry air, and holding their wings half-spread for coolness. All birds during the pairing season become more or less sentimental, and murmur soft nothings in a tone very unlike the grinding-organ repetition and loudness of their habitual song. The crow is very comical as a

lover, and to hear him trying to soften his croak to the proper Saint Preux standard, has something the effect of a Mississippi boatman quoting Tennyson. Yet there are few things to my ear more melodious than his caw of a clear winter morning as it drops to you filtered through five hundred fathoms of crisp blue air. The hostility of all smaller birds makes the moral character of the crow, for all his deaconlike demeanor and garb, somewhat questionable. He could never sally forth without insult. The golden robins, especially, would chase him as far as I could follow with my eye, making him duck clumsily to avoid their importunate bills. I do not believe, however, that he robbed any nests hereabouts, for the refuse of the gas-works, which, in our free-and-easy community, is allowed to poison the river, supplied him with dead alewives in abundance. I used to watch him making his periodical visits to the salt-marshes and coming back with a fish in his beak to his young savages, who, no doubt, like it in that condition which makes it savory to the Kanakas and other corvine races of men.

Orioles are in great plenty with me. I have seen seven males flashing about the garden at once. A merry crew of them swing their hammocks from the pendulous boughs. During one of these latter years, when the canker-worms stripped our elms as bare as winter, these birds went to the trouble of rebuilding their unroofed nests, and chose for the purpose trees which are safe from those swarming vandals, such as the ash and the button-wood.

One year a pair (disturbed, I suppose, elsewhere) built a second nest in an elm, within a few yards of the house. My friend, Edward E. Hale, told me once that the oriole rejected from his web all strands of brilliant color, and I thought it a striking example of that instinct of concealment noticeable in many birds, though it should seem in this instance that the nest was amply protected by its position from all marauders but owls and squirrels. Last year, however, I had the fullest proof that Mr. Hale was mistaken. A pair of orioles built on the lowest trailer of a weeping elm, which hung within ten feet of our drawing-room window, and so low that I could reach it from the ground. The nest was wholly woven and felted with ravellings of woollen carpet in which scarlet predominated. Would the same thing have happened in the woods? Or did the nearness of a human dwelling perhaps give the birds a greater feeling of security? They are very bold, by the way, in quest of cordage, and I have often watched them stripping the fibrous bark from a honeysuckle growing over the very door. But, indeed, all my birds look upon me as if I were a mere tenant at will, and they were landlords. With shame I confess it, I have been bullied even by a hummingbird. This spring, as I was cleansing a pear-tree of its lichens, one of these little zigzagging blurs came purring toward me, couching his long bill like a lance, his throat sparkling with angry fire, to warn me off from a Missouri-currant whose honey he was sipping. And many a time he has

driven me out of a flower-bed. This summer, by the way, a pair of these winged emeralds fastened their mossy acorn-cup upon a bough of the same elm which the orioles had enlivened the year before. We watched all their proceedings from the window through an opera-glass, and saw their two nestlings grow from black needles with a tuft of down at the lower end, till they whirled away on their first short experimental flights. They became strong of wing in a surprisingly short time, and I never saw them or the male bird after, though the female was regular as usual in her visits to our petunias and verbenas. I do not think it ground enough for a generalization, but in the many times when I watched the old birds feeding their young, the mother always alighted, while the father as uniformly remained upon the wing.

The bobolinks are generally chance visitors, tinkling through the garden in blossoming-time, but this year, owing to the long rains early in the season, their favorite meadows were flooded, and they were driven to the upland. So I had a pair of them domiciled in my grass-field. The male used to perch in an apple-tree, then in full bloom, and, while I stood perfectly still close by, he would circle away, quivering round the entire field of five acres, with no break in his song, and settle down again among the blossoms, to be hurried away almost immediately by a new rapture of music. He had the volubility of an Italian charlatan at a fair, and, like him, appeared to be proclaiming the mer-

its of some quack remedy. *Opodeldoc-opodeldoc-try-Doctor-Lincoln's-opodeldoc!* he seemed to repeat over and over again, with a rapidity that would have distanced the deftest-tongued Figaro that ever rattled. I remember Count Gurowski saying once, with that easy superiority of knowledge about this country which is the monopoly of foreigners, that we had no singing-birds! Well, well, Mr. Hepworth Dixon has found the typical America in Oneida and Salt Lake City. Of course, an intelligent European is the best judge of these matters. The truth is there are more singing-birds in Europe because there are fewer forests. These songsters love the neighborhood of man because hawks and owls are rarer, while their own food is more abundant. Most people seem to think, the more trees, the more birds. Even Châteaubriand, who first tried the primitive-forest-cure, and whose description of the wilderness in its imaginative effects is unmatched, fancies the "people of the air singing their hymns to him." So far as my own observation goes, the farther one penetrates the sombre solitudes of the woods, the more seldom does one hear the voice of any singing-bird. In spite of Châteaubriand's minuteness of detail, in spite of that marvellous reverberation of the decrepit tree falling of its own weight, which he was the first to notice, I cannot help doubting whether he made his way very deep into the wilderness. At any rate, in a letter to Fontanes, written in 1804, he speaks of *mes chevaux paissants à quelque distance.* To be sure Châteaubri-

and was apt to mount the high horse, and this may have been but an afterthought of the *grand seigneur*, but certainly one would not make much headway on horseback toward the druid fastnesses of the primeval pine.

The bobolinks build in considerable numbers in a meadow within a quarter of a mile of us. A houseless lane passes through the midst of their camp, and in clear westerly weather, at the right season, one may hear a score of them singing at once. When they are breeding, if I chance to pass, one of the male birds always accompanies me like a constable, flitting from post to post of the rail-fence, with a short note of reproof continually repeated, till I am fairly out of the neighborhood. Then he will swing away into the air and run down the wind, gurgling music without stint over the unheeding tussocks of meadow-grass and dark clumps of bulrushes that mark his domain.

We have no bird whose song will match the nightingale's in compass, none whose note is so rich as that of the European blackbird; but for mere rapture I have never heard the bobolink's rival. Yet his opera-season is a short one. The ground and tree sparrows are our most constant performers. It is now late in August, and one of the latter sings every day and all day long in the garden. Till within a fortnight, a pair of indigo-birds would keep up their lively *duo* for an hour together. While I write, I hear an oriole gay as in June, and the plaintive *may-be* of the goldfinch tells me he is stealing my lettuce-seeds. I know

not what the experience of others may have been, but the only bird I have ever heard sing in the night has been the chip-bird. I should say he sang about as often during the darkness as cocks crow. One can hardly help fancying that he sings in his dreams.

> "Father of light, what sunnie seed,
> What glance of day hast thou confined
> Into this bird? To all the breed
> This busie ray thou hast assigned;
> Their magnetism works all night
> And dreams of Paradise and light."

On second thought, I remember to have heard the cuckoo strike the hours nearly all night with the regularity of a Swiss clock.

The dead limbs of our elms, which I spare to that end, bring us the flicker every summer, and almost daily I hear his wild scream and laugh close at hand, himself invisible. He is a shy bird, but a few days ago I had the satisfaction of studying him through the blinds as he sat on a tree within a few feet of me. Seen so near and at rest, he makes good his claim to the title of pigeon-woodpecker. Lumberers have a notion that he is harmful to timber, digging little holes through the bark to encourage the settlement of insects. The regular rings of such perforations which one may see in almost any apple-orchard seem to give some probability to this theory. Almost every season a solitary quail visits us, and, unseen among the currant-bushes, calls *Bob White*, *Bob White*, as if he were playing at hide-and-seek with that imaginary being. A rarer visitant is the turtle-dove,

whose pleasant coo (something like the muffled crow of a cock from a coop covered with snow) I have sometimes heard, and whom I once had the good luck to see close by me in the mulberry-tree. The wild-pigeon, once numerous, I have not seen for many years.[1] Of savage birds, a hen-hawk now and then quarters himself upon us for a few days, sitting sluggish in a tree after a surfeit of poultry. One of them once offered me a near shot from my study-window one drizzly day for several hours. But it was Sunday, and I gave him the benefit of its gracious truce of God.

Certain birds have disappeared from our neighborhood within my memory. I remember when the whippoorwill could be heard in Sweet Auburn. The night-hawk, once common, is now rare. The brown thrush has moved farther up country. For years I have not seen or heard any of the larger owls, whose hooting was one of my boyish terrors. The cliff-swallow, strange emigrant, that eastward takes his way, has come and gone again in my time. The bank-swallows, wellnigh innumerable during my boyhood, no longer frequent the crumbly cliff of the gravel-pit by the river. The barn-swallows, which once swarmed in our barn, flashing through the dusty sunstreaks of the mow, have been gone these many years. My father would lead me out to see them gather on the roof, and take counsel before their yearly migration, as Mr. White used to see them at Selborne. *Eheu, fugaces!* Thank fortune, the swift still glues his nest, and

[1] They made their appearance again this summer (1870).

rolls his distant thunders night and day in the wide-throated chimneys, still sprinkles the evening air with his merry twittering. The populous heronry in Fresh Pond meadows has been wellnigh broken up, but still a pair or two haunt the old home, as the gypsies of Ellangowan their ruined huts, and every evening fly over us riverwards, clearing their throats with a hoarse hawk as they go, and, in cloudy weather, scarce higher than the tops of the chimneys. Sometimes I have known one to alight in one of our trees, though for what purpose I never could divine. Since this was written, they began in greater numbers to spend the day in a group of pines just within my borders. Once, when my exploring footstep startled them, I counted fifty flashing in circles over my head. By watchful protection I induced two pairs of them to build, and, as if sensible of my friendship, they made their nests in a pine within a hundred feet of the house. They shine for ever in Longfellow's verse. Kingfishers have sometimes puzzled me in the same way, perched at high noon in a pine, springing their watchman's rattle when they flitted away from my curiosity, and seeming to shove their top-heavy heads along as a man does a wheelbarrow.

Some birds have left us, I suppose, because the country is growing less wild. I once found a summer duck's nest within quarter of a mile of our house, but such a *trouvaille* would be impossible now as Kidd's treasure. And yet the mere taming of the neighborhood does not quite satisfy me as an

explanation. Twenty years ago, on my way to bathe in the river, I saw every day a brace of woodcock, on the miry edge of a spring within a few rods of a house, and constantly visited by thirsty cows. There was no growth of any kind to conceal them, and yet these ordinarily shy birds were almost as indifferent to my passing as common poultry would have been. Since bird-nesting has become scientific, and dignified itself as oölogy, that, no doubt, is partly to blame for some of our losses. But some old friends are constant. Wilson's thrush comes every year to remind me of that most poetic of ornithologists. He flits before me through the pine-walk like the very genius of solitude. A pair of pewees have built immemorially on a jutting brick in the arched entrance to the ice-house. Always on the same brick, and never more than a single pair, though two broods of five each are raised there every summer. How do they settle their claim to the homestead? By what right of primogeniture? Once the children of a man employed about the place *oölogized* the nest, and the pewees left us for a year or two. I felt towards those boys as the messmates of the Ancient Mariner did towards him after he had shot the albatross. But the pewees came back at last, and one of them is now on his wonted perch, so near my window that I can hear the click of his bill as he snaps a fly on the wing with the unerring precision a stately Trasteverina shows in the capture of her smaller deer. The pewee is the first bird to pipe up in the morning; and, during the early summer he preludes his

matutinal ejaculation of *pewee* with a slender whistle, unheard at any other time. He saddens with the season, and, as summer declines, he changes his note to *eheu, pewee!* as if in lamentation. Had he been an Italian bird, Ovid would have had a plaintive tale to tell about him. He is so familiar as often to pursue a fly through the open window into my library.

There is something inexpressibly dear to me in these old friendships of a lifetime. There is scarce a tree of mine but has had, at some time or other, a happy homestead among its boughs, and to which I cannot say,

> "Many light hearts and wings,
> Which now be dead, lodged in thy living bowers."

My walk under the pines would lose half its summer charm were I to miss that shy anchorite, the Wilson's thrush, nor hear in haying-time the metallic ring of his song, that justifies his rustic name of *scythe-whet.* I protect my game as jealously as an English squire. If anybody had oölogized a certain cuckoo's nest I know of (I have a pair in my garden every year), it would have left me a sore place in my mind for weeks. I love to bring these aborigines back to the mansuetude they showed to the early voyagers, and before (forgive the involuntary pun) they had grown accustomed to man and knew his savage ways. And they repay your kindness with a sweet familiarity too delicate ever to breed contempt. I have made a Penn-treaty with them, preferring that to the Puritan way with the natives, which converted them to a

little Hebraism and a great deal of Medford rum. If they will not come near enough to me (as most of them will), I bring them close with an opera-glass, — a much better weapon than a gun. I would not, if I could, convert them from their pretty pagan ways. The only one I sometimes have savage doubts about is the red squirrel. I *think* he oölogizes. I *know* he eats cherries (we counted five of them at one time in a single tree, the stones pattering down like the sparse hail that preludes a storm), and that he gnaws off the small end of pears to get at the seeds. He steals the corn from under the noses of my poultry. But what would you have? He will come down upon a limb of the tree I am lying under till he is within a yard of me. He and his mate will scurry up and down the great black-walnut for my diversion, chattering like monkeys. Can I sign his death-warrant who has tolerated me about his grounds so long? Not I. Let them steal, and welcome. I am sure I should, had I had the same bringing up and the same temptation. As for the birds, I do not believe there is one of them but does more good than harm; and of how many featherless bipeds can this be said?

NOTES.

NATURE.

Page 20, line 2. *Gabriel.* Hebrew, "God is my strong one," the name of one of the seven archangels.

Line 3. *Uriel.* Hebrew, "Light of God," another of the archangels.

Line 20. *The village.* "On the skirt of the village." Concord, where Emerson lived mainly from 1832 until his death.

Line 21. *River.* The Concord River.

Page 21, line 2. *Villeggiatura.* Italian, the enjoyment of country pleasures.

Page 22, line 7. *Versailles.* The famous royal palace of Louis XIII. of France and his successors.

Paphos. The celebrated temple of Astarte or Venus in the island of Cyprus.

Line 8. *Ctesiphon.* The site of the great palace of Khusrau I., king of Persia.

Line 19. *Notch Mountains.* Probably the White Mountains, in the vicinity of Crawford Notch.

Line 22. *Dorian.* Grecian.

Apollo. In Greek and later in Roman mythology, one of the great Olympian gods, the god of music, poetry, and healing.

Diana. In Roman mythology the goddess of the moon, the divine huntress.

Page 23, line 16. *Tempe.* A valley in eastern Thessaly, celebrated from ancient times for its beauty.

Line 18. *Como Lake.* A lake of great beauty near the Swiss border in Northern Italy.

Line 19. *Madeira Islands.* A group of islands belonging to Portugal and situated in the Atlantic Ocean west of Africa.

Line 26. *The 'Campagna.* A large plain in Italy surrounding Rome.

Page 25, line 2. *Pan.* In ancient Greek mythology the god of pastures, forests, and flocks.

Page 26, line 20. *Proteus.* In classical mythology a god who had the power of assuming different shapes.

Page 27, line 5. *Mosaic.* The view of the world set forth in Genesis.

Ptolemaic. The system of astronomy and geography built up by Ptolemy, an Alexandrian, in the second century, which endured until the sixteenth, when the Copernican system displaced it.

Line 11. *Flora.* In Roman mythology the goddess of flowers and spring.

Line 12. *Fauna.* The goddess of fields and shepherds.

Ceres. The goddess of grain and harvest.

Pomona. The goddess of fruit-trees.

Line 13. *Trilobite.* An extinct crustacean.

Line 16. *Plato.* The greatest of the Greek philosophers. He lived B. C. 427–347, chiefly at Athens.

Page 29, line 22. *Himmaleh.* "Himalaya," a mountain system extending along the northern frontier of Hindustan.

Page 30, line 22. *Franklin.* Benjamin Franklin, (1706–1790) demonstrated by experiments that lightning is a discharge of electricity.

Dalton. John Dalton, 1766–1844, perfected the atomic theory.

Davy. Sir Humphrey Davy, 1778–1829, invented the safety-lamp.

Line 23. *Black.* Joseph Black, 1728–1799, a Scotch chemist noted for his discoveries in regard to carbonic-acid gas and latent heat.

Page 33, line 3. *Stoics.* The first Stoics were followers of Zeno, who lived about 308 B. C. and taught an austere doctrine of virtue.

Page 34, line 7. *Luther.* Martin Luther, 1483–1546, a German reformer and the founder of the present literary language of Germany.

Line 9. *Behmen.* Jakob Behmen (or Boehme), 1575–1624, a German mystic.

Line 10. *Fox.* George Fox, 1624–1691, the founder of the Quakers.

Line 11. *James Naylor*, 1618–1660, a Puritan fanatic, later became a Quaker.

Page 36, line 22. *Operose.* Laborious.

Page 39, line 26. *Œdipus.* In Greek legend a king of Thebes, who ventured to attempt to answer the questions of the Sphinx, a fabled monster.

Page 40, line 25. *Prunella.* The plant self-heal, said to have been named from the ailment which it was reputed to heal.

MY GARDEN ACQUAINTANCE.

This essay was written in 1868, when Lowell was in his fiftieth year, and was published in the following year. Its first sentence shows as markedly the predilection of its author toward literature as the beginning of Nature shows Emerson's bent toward philosophy.

Page 45, line 10. *Oriel.* One of the colleges of Oxford University, England.

Lines 15, 16. *Barrington, Pennant.* Characters in Gilbert White's "Natural History of Selborne."

Line 17. *Walton.* Izaak Walton, 1593–1683, famous for his work, "The Complete Angler."

Line 19. *Cowper.* William Cowper, 1731–1800, a celebrated English poet.

Page 46, line 2. *White.* Gilbert White, 1720–1793, was curate at Selborne, England.

Line 15. *Diocletian,* 245–313 A. D., Emperor of Rome from 284 to 305, when he retired to Salona in Dalmatia.

Line 22. *Burgoyne,* General, surrendered to the American forces at Saratoga, October 17, 1777.

Line 28. *Chartreuse.* A famous French monastery.

Page 47, line 8. *Anthropophagous.* Man-eating.

Line 17. *Willoughby, Ray.* Two noted English naturalists, contemporaries of White.

Page 48, line 1. *Windsor Castle.* The royal residence of the English court.

Line 14. *Diogenes.* A Greek Cynic philosopher of about 350 B. C. who is reputed to have lived in a tub.

Page 50, line 1. *Mercury.* In Roman mythology the herald and ambassador of Jupiter.

Barabas. The Jew of Malta in Marlowe's play of that name.

Page 51, line 5. *M. C.* Member of Congress.

Line 10. *Cloaca Maxima.* The chief drain of ancient Rome.

Page 52, line 4. *Musquash.* Indian name for muskrat.

Page 53, line 5. *1870.* The date of this essay is given by Mr. Scudder in his Life of Lowell as 1868, but it was evidently not completed then.

Line 27. *Emerson's Titmouse.* A reference to Emerson's poem of that name.

Line 31. *Bloomfield.* Probably Robert Bloomfield, who was an English poet and shoemaker.

Page 54, line 1. *Poor Richard.* The pseudonym under which Benjamin Franklin issued his Almanac.

Line 13. *Johnson.* Dr. Samuel Johnson, 1709–1784, an

English poet, essayist, and lexicographer, whose fondness for eating is here hinted at.

Line 20. *White Hills.* The White Mountains.

Line 28. *Argos.* A city in Argolis, Greece ; here used for the entire country.

Page 55, line 3. *Spies.* See Numbers viii. 15.

Line 10. *Wellington* made his early reputation fighting with the Portuguese against the Spaniards.

Page 56, line 4. *Pecksniff.* A notorious hypocrite in Dickens's "Martin Chuzzlewit."

Page 58, line 5. *Watts.* Dr. Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, an English hymn-writer and author.

Page 60, line 27. *Æsop.* According to tradition, a Greek fabulist of the sixth century B. C.

Page 61, line 4. *Blackbirds.* See in The Biglow Papers,

"Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall trees
An' settlin' things in windy Congresses."

Page 62, line 2. *Saint Preux.* The lover in Rousseau's novel "La Nouvelle Héloise."

Line 22. *Kanakas.* The original inhabitants of the Hawaiian Islands.

Line 23. *Corvine.* Crowlike.

Page 63, line 3. *Hale.* Edward Everett Hale, the author of "The Man without a Country" and many other stories and papers, was the friend of Lowell, Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, and Whittier.

Page 64, line 30. *Rapture of Music.* Compare the charming lines in "Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line :"

. . . "June's bridesman, poet of the year,
Gladness on wings, the bobolink is here."

Page 65, line 4. *Figaro.* A gay, lively character in several plays by Beaumarchais.

Line 9. *Dixon.* William Hepworth Dixon, 1821–1879, an English journalist.

JAN 27 1902

Line 18. *Châteaubriand.* François René Auguste, Vicomte de Châteaubriand, 1768–1848, a celebrated French author and statesman.

Line 30. *Fontanes.* Marquis Louis de Fontanes, 1757–1821, a French politician and poet.

Page 69, line 6. *Ellangowan.* A place in Scott's novel "Guy Mannering."

Line 31. *Kidd.* Captain William Kidd, hanged in 1701. A notorious pirate whose buried treasure is still sought.

Page 70, line 11. *Wilson.* Alexander Wilson, 1766–1813. A Scotch-American ornithologist.

Line 24. *The Ancient Mariner.* The chief character in Coleridge's poem of that name.

Line 30. *Trasteverina.* A dweller across the Tiber, in the workingmen's quarter of Rome.

Page 71, line 5. *Ovid.* Publius Ovidius Naso, 43 B. C.–18 A. D., a Roman poet.

Line 30. *Penn-treaty.* Such a treaty as William Penn made with the Indians.

Page 72, line 1. *Medford.* A town situated on Mystic River in Massachusetts.

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